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UNH Research Finds Differences in Rural U.S. Fall Along Income Lines

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UNH Research Finds Differences in Rural U.S. Fall Along Income Lines

Thursday, September 7, 2017

(HTTPS://WWW.UNH.EDU/UNHTODAY/NEWS/RESEARCH/RESEARCH-FINDS-FINDS-DIFFERENCES-RURAL-US-FALL-ALONG-INCOME-LINES) (HTTPS://WWW.UNH.EDU/UNHTODAY/NEWS/RESEARCH/RESEARCH-FINDS-FINDS-DIFFERENCES-RURAL-US-FALL-ALONG-INCOME-LINES) (HTTPS://WWW.UNH.EDU/UNHTODAY/NEWS/RESEARCH/RESEARCH-FINDS-FINDS-DIFFERENCES-RURAL-US-FALL-ALONG-INCOME-LINES)

DURHAM, N.H. – Nearly 75 percent of low-income rural counties are in the South while middle-income rural counties are clustered in the Midwest and high-income rural counties are clustered in the West, according to new research released by the Carsey School of Public Policy at the University of New Hampshire.

“Those living in lower-income rural areas, compared to those in higher-income rural areas are less educated and less likely to be employed, and those who are employed are more likely to work in production and management,” the researchers said. “They also depend more heavily on public sector supports. In short, our research contradicts the dominant image of a homogenous rural United States.”

The researchers also found that 27 percent of people living in very-low-income rural counties are black compared to just one percent in very-high-income rural counties. Higher-income rural counties also have a larger share of immigrants but a smaller share of non-native speakers.

“Nutritional assistance, public health insurance and the Earned Income Tax Credit are most highly used among those living in low-income rural counties, and cutbacks in federal safety net programs and proposed repeal of the Affordable Care Act may disproportionately harm low-income people in the rural U.S.,” the researchers said.

The research was conducted by Rebecca Glauber, associate professor of sociology and a faculty fellow at the Carsey School, and Andrew Schaefer, research scientist in the vulnerable families program at the Carsey School. Their full report can be found here: <https://carsey.unh.edu/publication/rural-us-assistance> (<https://carsey.unh.edu/publication/rural-us-assistance>).

The Carsey School of Public Policy conducts research, leadership development, and engaged scholarship relevant to public policy. They address pressing challenges, striving for innovative, responsive, and equitable solutions at all levels of government and in the for-profit and nonprofit sectors.

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